



Bluegrass Stars Section

Central Region

Spring 2023

MBCA Mission Statement: "To elevate the Mercedes-Benz experience through knowledge, camaraderie, and exceptional events."

Special points of interest:

- Membership Renewal
- Central Region Event
- MBCA National Event

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President's Message

Hello Stars!

2023 is well underway, and I hope you all agree that it has been a very successful beginning!

As with any President or Officer, new or a seasoned pro, I want this year to be what you, the members, want. Contact with all of you is a main goal, so please do not hesitate to contact me on any issues you have. I will always be open to suggestions, comments, concerns, or any thoughts you have about our Stars Section.

This year, we have two big events on the calendar, the Central Regional and the National, and they are both so close by that you won't want to miss either of them. Please read more about them in the upcoming pages.

And, of course, the Keeneland Concours d'Elegance will again be in Lexington, KY on July 15.

Before you know it, it will be the Christmas season again, with the Holiday Party at the Hurstbourne Country Club on December 10th!

We haven't forgotten the other months this year - we have even more new and exciting events in the works, so please stay tuned and watch your emails for announcements!

Jim Keith, Ann Mudge, Fred Mudge, and I hope to see you all at these special events!

J. Anne Gilliland
Bluegrass Stars
President

Saturday, January 28th, the Stars launched the 2023 events calendar with a Members Meeting and Dinner at the Common Haus Hall in Jeffersonville, IN.

Twenty-three members chose an authentic German meal from a menu of items all made in-house, served hot and delicious in the first floor dining room reserved for us.

New members, Bill and Sue Hall, joined us as well as returning members of ten years, Albert and Laurine Holmes, from Jeffersonville. We look forward to seeing them at many of our upcoming events.

Owner, Charles Crump, was especially inviting and accommodating to our group, as was Maggie and the wait staff.



Common Haus Hall



Thursday evening, February 23rd, found the Bluegrass Stars Section at Mercedes-Benz of Louisville for our second event of the year.

It was wonderful to see such a great turnout for this event which included a tour of the beautiful facility, an extensive presentation of what we can expect from the new EQ electric Benz, and a delicious Italian meal catered by Buca di Beppo, all courtesy of the dealership. Thank you to the General Manager, Miller Warren, and Mercedes-Benz of Louisville for an incredible experience.

There were 29 Stars present, along with Andrew Backer, who drove down from the Cincinnati Section just to join us! He is welcome back anytime, and we look forward to seeing him again next month, March 18th, at Collection 21 in Erlanger, KY, with the Cincinnati Section!



Collection21

MEMORIES FROM THE PAST



Members from the HONK organization served as tour guides.



It was so good to see Steve Loboyko.



John & Suzanne Rice



Ken Koehler, Central Region Director, and wife, Sata

Mackenzie Pizza Erlanger, KY

Unseasonably cold weather and snow flurries couldn't keep the Bluegrass Stars from joining the Cincinnati Section on Saturday, March 18th, in Erlanger, Kentucky for their tour of the vintage cars at Collection21. The minimal entry fee to tour and view 232 vehicles on display in this one-owner collection benefits the non-profit charity, Housing Opportunities of Northern Kentucky or HONK.

Joining us were Ken Kikuchi, a new member who had joined the Bluegrass Stars only the day before, and Region Director, Ken Koehler and wife, Sara.

After visiting Collection21, the two Mercedes-Benz sections gathered for lunch at MacKenzie River Pizza Grill & Pub to enjoy good food, the company of new friends and old, and share stories about our favorite topic - Mercedes-Benz!

Thanks so much to Cincinnati's Acting Section President, Austin McAnanly, and Event Chairperson, Mark Smith, for their gracious invitation and the opportunity for the members of the two Sections to gather and enjoy the first of many more shared events in the future.





*April 29	Tony York's Glendale, KY
May 20	Bourbon on Main Restaurant Tours of State House & Vietnam Memorial Frankfort, KY
June 15-18	MBCA Central Region Event Nashville, TN
July 15	Concours d'Elegance Keeneland Lexington, KY
August 12	Schnitzelbank German Restaurant Jasper, IN
September 7-11	MBCA National Indianapolis, IN
October (TBD)	Tipsy Tour Frankfort, KY
November (TBD)	German American Club Louisville, KY
December 10	Holiday Party Hurstbourne Country Club Louisville, KY

*If you want to RSVP for Tony York's from here, click on <https://forms.gle/S81iuFDEv5YqMbWK9>.

Official Local Events



German American Club Louisville, KY

April 1,	6-10pm	Bierhalle - River City Polkatz
April 16,	4-7pm	GHA Grunderfest
April 22,	6-10pm	Bierhalle- Rhienehold Gold
May 27,	6-10pm	Bierhalle- Rounders Brothers Band
June 7,	2-11pm	Wurstfest - Rhienehold Band
July 8	6-10pm	Biergarten River City Polkatz
July 22 -	6-9pm	Biergarten Rhienehold Gold Band
Aug 12	6-10pm	Biergarten Rounders Brothers
Sept 30	6-10pm	Biergarten Hank Rose Project
Oct 28	6-10pm	Halloween Bierhalle River City Polkatz
Nov11	6-10pm	Veteran's Day Bierhalle Rounders Brothers
Dec 2	2 -9pm	Christkindlmarkt Rhienehold Gold

* Only serve food at Biergarten 6-10 pm

* No reservations

* Open to the public

1st Saturday each month (April – November)

Coffee and Cars
Fante's Coffee House
Louisville, KY

2nd Saturday each month

Cars and Coffee
Captain's Quarters
Louisville, KY

Save Today Through MBCA's Limited-Time Membership Renewal Program



Dear MBCA Member:

Your Board of Directors has focused on providing value for membership and on shielding members from ever-increasing costs. However, after much deliberation and reluctance, a \$10 dues increase was approved at the November Annual Meeting. This dues increase will begin July 1, 2023. Until that time, you may renew at the current rates.

"The last time MBCA experienced a dues increase was in 2014," says Doug Geganto, MBCA National President. "The Budget Committee worked tirelessly to avoid presenting dues increase to the National Board for approval."

To incentivize members to renew, MBCA is offering one additional month of membership with a two-year membership; and two additional months with a three-year membership, at current rates", Geganto says. "The Club is doing everything it can to help members save and to continue enjoying the exclusive member benefits through this membership renewal campaign."

To take advantage of the immediate savings, login to your MBCA profile at <https://www.mbca.org>, call the office at 800-637-2360, or fill out the attached form and return it by mail, fax or email.

We appreciate our members and look forward to serving you in 2023!

Please see next page for the Promo Renewal Form.



Name _____

Member Number _____

Member Address _____

Phone _____ Cell _____ Email _____

U.S.	Canada & International
<input type="radio"/> \$55.00 for 1 Year	<input type="radio"/> \$85.00 for 1 Year
<input type="radio"/> \$107.00 for 2 Years +1 Month	<input type="radio"/> \$127.00 for 2 Years +1 Month
<input type="radio"/> \$157.00 for 3 Years +2 Months	<input type="radio"/> \$187.00 for 3 Years +2 Months

Add additional section(s) fees: Number of Sections _____ X \$15.00 per year.

Total Amount \$ _____

☐ Check # _____

Only checks drawn on U.S. Banks are accepted. Please make checks payable to "MBCA".

☐ Credit Card# _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV# (Security-code) _____

Billing Address for Credit Card (if different from above)

I authorize Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Inc. to charge my credit card for a one-time payment for the above amount listed on this form.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please mail, fax, or email completed form to: Mercedes-Benz Club of America, 1907 Lelaray St, Colorado Springs, CO 80909, Fax 1-719-633-9283, Email: info@mbca.org. If you would like to renew your membership over the phone, please call the National Business Office at 1-800-637-2360 Mon-Thurs. 8am-4:30pm, Fridays 8am-4pm Mtn. Time. This membership renewal offer is subject to change and will expire after June 30th, 2023.

"Get to Know Your Stars"

James (Jim) P. Keith
Bluegrass Stars Vice-President



A car enthusiast, I've always liked cars and traded frequently, generally luxury models – Lincoln, Chryslers. I bought my first Mercedes E320 when I was sixty, and the trading trend continues. I'm now on my eighth one, my second SL. I am not an expert or mechanic, I just enjoy nice cars.

Having been a Mercedes-Benz Bluegrass Stars member for 20 years, I have enjoyed the outings, members and dinners and thought I should become more active and participate in the club activities. Annually, I have attended the Keeneland Concours and in recent years the Amelia Island Concours.

I enjoyed two careers, first in the family retail business – men's clothing and shoes – followed by the tourism business with the Clark-Floyd Indiana Convention and Tourism Bureau – the "Sunny Side of Louisville".

I have two children, both educators. My daughter recently retired (hard to believe) as principal of the largest high school in the Louisville area, and my son is an elementary teacher. I have five grandchildren, all college graduates employed in engineering, finance, health services, and education. I have four great-grandchildren.

Linda and I just celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary. We look forward to an active year participating in the Mercedes-Benz Club of America Bluegrass Stars Section.

Mercedes-Benz Central Region



Holiday Inn Express-Brentwood South-Cool Springs

8097 Moores Lane; Brentwood, TN 37027

It is never too early to put this on your 2023 calendar, so make your reservations now at the Holiday Inn Express @ [MBCA Booking Link](#) as this event is sure to fill up quickly.

We have been allotted sixty (60) rooms with the possibility of adding more if they are available. Our **deadline for hotel reservations** at the conference rate of \$139 (plus added applicable taxes and fees) is **April 20, 2023. Attendees have up to seven (7) days prior to the event (6/07/23) to cancel a reservation without a penalty.**

The 2 1/2-day event schedule is full of exciting things for us to do and see. Just to name a few are:

- Humble Baron Restaurant
- Uncle Nearest Distillery
- Bavarian Bierhaus
- Belle Meade Historic Site & Winery
- Lane Motor Museum
- 2 local Mercedes-Benz dealerships

So, don't hesitate and make your reservations. Here is what you need to do:

- 1) RSVP by **April 27th** for the Central Region Event to Ken Koehler at skkoehler@att.net.
- 2) Make your reservation by **April 20th** at the Holiday Inn Express by calling the hotel at 615-309-8860 (Be sure & ask for the "MBCA Central Region Room Block") or online at [MBCA Booking Link](#) in order to insure the group rate.
- 3) Pay the Registration Fee of \$110/person for the event by **April 27th**. Make a check payable to Ken Koehler and send to 6168 Ruthven Drive; Noblesville, IN 46062.



September 7th - September 10th

The 2023 MERCEDES GRANDE in Indianapolis, Indiana is a celebration of all things Mercedes-Benz. Four days of Mercedes-Benz Culture, Causes, People, Lifestyle, Technology, and Cars Presented by the Mercedes Benz Club of America. Plan now to be a part of this exciting and extraordinary affair!

Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance, Inc.



The Hilton Head Island Concours d' Elegance & Motoring Festival, honoring rich tradition with southern flair, will curate a rare collection of automotive delights set against a distinctive Low-country backdrop that can only be found here. A Fine Pairing.

Designed with purpose and driven by passion since 2002. Since its inception, the Hilton Head Island Concours has continued to elevate every aspect of this unique Lowcountry lifestyle event into an art form.

TICKETS FOR THE 2023 SHOW WILL GO ON SALE THIS SPRING.

“Tech Time”

LED Upgrading Interior/Exterior Lighting - Should You?

By Steve Loboyko

We all know that LED lighting is energy saving and longer-lasting (?) when compared to incandescent bulbs. So, is replacing all of the incandescents in your older Mercedes worthwhile? Some of the LED suppliers claim “energy savings” but I’d be surprised if using LEDs saved a thimble full of gas after 100K miles of driving. Other suppliers claim “long-lasting”. Well, while trying to find quality LED’s on eBay, I had several LEDs fail entirely or go intermittent within a month or two of installation. None of the incandescents replaced had failed. Come to think of it, I have had several 100 watt household LED bulbs fail; pity, because they offered the most energy savings. So much for the savings!

Interior Colors

I first replaced my interior lighting with white LEDs. I found this lighting to be harsh (too blue-ish). I could not and cannot find a maker of automotive bulbs that are “soft white”. So, I used amber lighting, and I am pleased with the results.

CANBUS

Most, but not all, LEDs in the interior and trunk of the E class are not monitored for “bulb out” by the car’s computer systems so CANBUS (the car’s computer network) or non-CANBUS bulbs can be used. **On an E class (W212), the footwell lights under the dash are an exception to this.** I have found that, generally, CANBUS bulbs are superior in quality to non-CANBUS bulbs, and I’ve used them everywhere although they are more expensive. I’ve had no CANBUS bulb failures.



Incandescent T10 Bulb Vs. Non-CANBUS Bulb Vs. CANBUS Bulb (L-R)

Most LED lighting is polarized and if the lamp doesn’t work, install it in the other direction and retry.

LED Headlight bulbs To Replace incandescent/halogens

Firstly, let me state that recent, quality LED headlights are FAR superior to those made even a few years ago in brightness and design. Unfortunately, instead of being discontinued, those older designs went “downmarket” and now sell for 15-50\$ per pair. In my opinion, these are all garbage and may in fact be dangerous to use (see below as to why). Designs that are small and thin (see image) are far superior and contain copper heat pipes and quality, long-lasting ball-bearing equipped fans. These will generally cost 80-150\$ a pair.

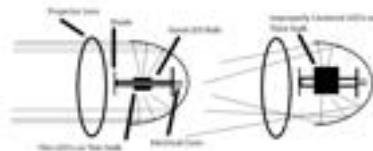


“Modern, Quality” vs. ‘Early, Questionable Design” LED H7 Bulbs

The Focusing Problem

Modern MBs use “projectors” for their headlights. These render a very precise lighting pattern when used with a halogen bulb with a filament of known, standard shape and manufacturing precision. It was very difficult (until recently) for LEDs to duplicate this, or to even come close. So, with the projector out of focus (see crude illustration below), the lighting will “blob”, and wind up in the faces of oncoming drivers. This is highly unsafe for everyone involved. IN MY OPINION, higher quality modern LED headlight bulbs allow much better focus when properly installed.

Even old-fashioned “reflector” headlights are made to expect the glowing filament to be in a particular spot, although reflector headlights are somewhat less precisely made, and therefore less sensitive.



“Good” Vs. “Bad” Focus for LED Installed in Headlamp Housing

Factory LED headlights that came with the car are built from the ground up to the size, shape, and position of the LED assembly, so these will always put out a good (and DOT legal) beam. Unfortunately, the LEDs are generally not replaceable in those headlights and the entire assembly must be replaced. By the way, have you checked the replacement prices of LED or Xenon headlight assemblies recently? A good number of them go into fairly deep four figures. Remember when you could get a “headlight assembly” (a round or rectangular sealed beam) at the supermarket for \$5.00? And, your 12-year old kid could install it with a Philips screwdriver? (End of old person rant).

Colors/Brightness

Color is described scientifically as the glow of an incandescent object at a certain temperature. GENERALLY, all LED bulbs are designed to glow at 6000-6500K (Kelvins, degrees above absolute zero), which is a somewhat blueish white (as opposed to the reddish white of incandescents). You will notice a difference. Your OTHER external incandescent/halogen lamps may now appear “yellowish”!

Newer, quality LEDs are MUCH brighter than halogen or even Xenon bulbs; even considering this, the “cutoff” of the projected beam won’t be in an oncoming driver’s eyes because of the small size of the powerful, small LEDs and the thin mounting, allowing proper focus.

The “CANBUS” Problem

As mentioned earlier, some circuits in the car are monitored for “bulb-out/shorted” conditions by the car’s computer network. Because LEDs use less power (current) than incandescents, computers will likely be fooled into believing that an LED bulb is out when it is not. This can result in flashing and a message on your dash. So, LED bulb suppliers will sell you “CANBUS Decoders”, which are basically nothing more than power resistors in plastic or metal boxes. They will make up the difference in power usage between an LED and incandescent headlight bulb. This can be as much as 20 watts, so these boxes will get quite hot - the power (as heat) has to go somewhere! Worse, the resistors have to be installed near each headlight, and this can be a headache.

The Legal Problem

Technically, replacing a halogen bulb with anything other a halogen bulb is not USDOT (US Department of Transportation) legal, mostly because of the focusing problem. However, again, in my personal opinion, good LED bulbs properly installed focus just as well as halogens. It’s up to you if you want to risk this. To back my opinion up, some aftermarket LED bulb/housing combinations are legal in Europe, and Europeans are definitely more persnickety on these sorts of regulations.

The “Right” Way

The right way to do this is to buy a car with factory-provided LED lighting. During the transition from Halogen to Bi-Xenon to LED, LED headlights were an expensive option on many vehicles including the W212 E class. Retrofitting these LED headlight assemblies (from an auto recycler, for example) is not easy, cheap, and in fact is extremely difficult/expensive on a Mercedes due to the integration (computer coding), sensor and wire harness changes.

Conclusion

So, should you do these types of upgrades or not? For interior use, I’m very satisfied but finding the right look and quality bulbs was time-consuming. For headlights, the jury is still out and it is really an option only for those who are determined and crafty. And, I don’t think that inexpensive LED headlight bulbs would pass inspection in states that have yearly inspections; a sharp-eyed inspector probably wouldn’t pass “good” LED replacement bulbs either.



“For Stars’ Eyes Only”

The Bluegrass Stars Section has a great retention rate for membership. Based on mbca.org records, in 2022, we lost 16 members. However, we gained 14 new or returning members, and as of this newsletter, we have 3 more new members, Jonathan Groth, Ken Kikuchi, and Bill Hall. Welcome Jonathan, Ken, and Bill. We will be sending this newsletter to those who

dropped out last year and encourage them to rejoin prior to the new annual fee increase. Thanks to all of you who remain faithful members, and we hope you find many reasons to stay.

We continue a search among our membership to fill two open positions. They are Venue Chairman and Membership Chairman. If you would like to know more about the roles that these two play in our leadership, please contact J. Anne Gilliland at mbca2023jag@gmail.com. Please consider joining the leadership of this awesome membership.

We aren’t the only ones searching to fill positions in leadership. We learned at the joint event with the Cincinnati Section on March 18th that they are recruiting for a new President in August 2023 as well as a Treasurer right now. Also (see below), there are National and Regional positions open.

Nomination Process for 2023 Election

This year there are three Director at Large (DAL) and six Regional Director (RD) (Northeast, Midwest, Rocky Mountain, Northwest, Central, and Western Regions) positions to be elected.

If you are interested in being considered, [CLICK HERE](#) for more information from The Governance Committee. **All Nomination Petitions must be submitted to the National Business Office, to the attention of the Governance Committee, by the May 1 deadline.**

Questions or further information? Please contact Governance Committee Chair Laura Simonds at lsimonds97520@gmail.com.

Also, please share with us two more things: Event/venue suggestions for next year and items you would like to see in our Bluegrass Stars Section newsletter. We are open to new, exciting ideas for each.

OK, I know I said two more things, but here is one more thing: We need a brief history of our Bluegrass Stars Section to show on the national website mbca.org. I believe we were originally Mercedes-Benz of Louisville. I know there are current members who have some historical information that is so important. Please email me at mbca.mudge@gmail.com and help me out with this.

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Purchase your MBCA Name Badge!

Name badges start at \$14 and come in navy, silver, or gold. Backings include magnet and safety pin. Each name badge will contain your name and your section. A third line will cost +\$1. Shipping within the U.S. is included.

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<https://www.bluegrassstars.mbca.org/>

And on Facebook!

Go to search icon and type in Mercedes-Benz Club of America-Bluegrass Stars, and you will find our page.